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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/008,280

11/08/2001

Andy Vonlanthen

34145

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7590

04/05/2006

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

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EXAMINER

NI, SUHAN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2615

DATE MAILED: 04/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/008,280

Applicant(s)

VONLANTHEN, ANDY

Examiner

Suhan Ni

Art Unit

2646

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 January 2006.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 and 21-44 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 21-44 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/25/2002.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____

Art Unit: 2615

DETAILED ACTION

1. The Art Unit location of your application in the PTO has changed. To aid in correlating any papers for this application, all further correspondence regarding this application should be directed to Group **Art Unit 2615**.
2. This communication is responsive to the claims filed 01/20/2006.

Response to Election/Restriction

3. This communication is responsive to the provisional election made without traverse on 01/20/2006 to prosecute the invention of Group I, **claims 1-10**. Other Groups, including claims 11-34 are withdrawn (21-34) or cancelled (11-20) from further consideration, as being drawn to a non-elected invention. A complete reply to a future final office action must include cancellation of the rest of non-elected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144). See MPEP § 821.01.
4. Newly submitted claims 35-44 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention **originally** claimed for the following reasons: the newly added claims including limitations which are not presented in original claims. Accordingly, claims 35-44 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Specification

The following guidelines illustrate the preferred layout for the specification of a utility application. These guidelines are suggested for the applicant's use.

Arrangement of the Specification

As provided in 37 CFR 1.77(b), the specification of a utility application should include the following sections in order. Each of the lettered items should appear in upper case, without underlining or bold type, as a section heading. If no text follows the section heading, the phrase “Not Applicable” should follow the section heading:

- (a) TITLE OF THE INVENTION.
- (b) CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS.
- (c) STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT.
- (d) INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC (See 37 CFR 1.52(e)(5) and MPEP 608.05. Computer program listings (37 CFR 1.96(c)), “Sequence Listings” (37 CFR 1.821(c)), and tables having more than 50 pages of text are permitted to be submitted on compact discs.) or REFERENCE TO A “MICROFICHE APPENDIX” (See MPEP § 608.05(a). “Microfiche Appendices” were accepted by the Office until March 1, 2001.)
- (e) BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION.
 - (1) Field of the Invention.
 - (2) Description of Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
- (f) BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION.
- (g) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S).
- (h) DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION.

- (i) CLAIM OR CLAIMS (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (j) ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE (commencing on a separate sheet).

Content of Specification

- (a) Title of the Invention: See 37 CFR 1.72(a) and MPEP § 606. The title of the invention should be placed at the top of the first page of the specification unless the title is provided in an application data sheet. The title of the invention should be brief but technically accurate and descriptive, preferably from two to seven words may not contain more than 500 characters.
- (b) Cross-References to Related Applications: See 37 CFR 1.78 and MPEP § 201.11.
- (c) Statement Regarding Federally Sponsored Research and Development: See MPEP § 310.
- (d) Incorporation-By-Reference Of Material Submitted On a Compact Disc: The specification is required to include an incorporation-by-reference of electronic documents that are to become part of the permanent United States Patent and Trademark Office records in the file of a patent application. See 37 CFR 1.52(e) and MPEP § 608.05. Computer program listings (37 CFR 1.96(c)), "Sequence Listings" (37 CFR 1.821(c)), and tables having more than 50 pages of text were permitted as electronic documents on compact discs beginning on September 8, 2000. Or alternatively, Reference to a "Microfiche Appendix": See MPEP § 608.05(a). "Microfiche Appendices" were accepted by the Office until March 1, 2001.
- (e) Background of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(c). The specification should set forth the Background of the Invention in two parts:

- (1) Field of the Invention: A statement of the field of art to which the invention pertains. This statement may include a paraphrasing of the applicable U.S. patent classification definitions of the subject matter of the claimed invention. This item may also be titled "Technical Field."
- (2) Description of the Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 37 CFR 1.98: A description of the related art known to the applicant and including, if applicable, references to specific related art and problems involved in the prior art which are solved by the applicant's invention. This item may also be titled "Background Art."
- (f) Brief Summary of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(d). A brief summary or general statement of the invention as set forth in 37 CFR 1.73. The summary is separate and distinct from the abstract and is directed toward the invention rather than the disclosure as a whole. The summary may point out the advantages of the invention or how it solves problems previously existent in the prior art (and preferably indicated in the Background of the Invention). In chemical cases it should point out in general terms the utility of the invention. If possible, the nature and gist of the invention or the inventive concept should be set forth. Objects of the invention should be treated briefly and only to the extent that they contribute to an understanding of the invention.
- (g) Brief Description of the Several Views of the Drawing(s): See MPEP § 608.01(f). A reference to and brief description of the drawing(s) as set forth in 37 CFR 1.74.
- (h) Detailed Description of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(g). A description of the preferred embodiment(s) of the invention as required in 37 CFR 1.71. The

description should be as short and specific as is necessary to describe the invention adequately and accurately. Where elements or groups of elements, compounds, and processes, which are conventional and generally widely known in the field of the invention described and their exact nature or type is not necessary for an understanding and use of the invention by a person skilled in the art, they should not be described in detail. However, where particularly complicated subject matter is involved or where the elements, compounds, or processes may not be commonly or widely known in the field, the specification should refer to another patent or readily available publication which adequately describes the subject matter.

- (i) Claim or Claims: See 37 CFR 1.75 and MPEP § 608.01(m). The claim or claims must commence on separate sheet or electronic page (37 CFR 1.52(b)(3)). Where a claim sets forth a plurality of elements or steps, each element or step of the claim should be separated by a line indentation. There may be plural indentations to further segregate subcombinations or related steps. See 37 CFR 1.75 and MPEP § 608.01(i)-(p).
- (j) Abstract of the Disclosure: See MPEP § 608.01(f). A brief narrative of the disclosure as a whole in a single paragraph of 150 words or less commencing on a separate sheet following the claims. In an international application which has entered the national stage (37 CFR 1.491(b)), the applicant need not submit an abstract commencing on a separate sheet if an abstract was published with the international application under PCT Article 21. The abstract that appears on the cover page of the pamphlet published by the International Bureau (IB) of the

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the abstract that will be used by the USPTO. See MPEP § 1893.03(e).

- (k) Sequence Listing. See 37 CFR 1.821-1.825 and MPEP §§ 2421-2431. The requirement for a sequence listing applies to all sequences disclosed in a given application, whether the sequences are claimed or not. See MPEP § 2421.02.

5. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Objections

6. Claims 35-44 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claims 35-44 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 1 claims a hearing device and claims 35-44 claim a set of hearing devices, which clearly fails to further limiting claim 1.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

- (b) The invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.
(e) The invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

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7. Claims 1 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Leedom (U.S. Pat. - 5,825,896).

Regarding claim 1, Leedom discloses a **hearing aid** (Figs. 1 and 3), comprising: a microphone (18); speaker (14); a signal processing unit (18) and a power source (16), wherein said power source and said speaker form a first module, said microphone and signal processing unit form a second module and said first and said second modules are disassembly assembled as claimed.

Regarding claim 8, Leedom further discloses the hearing aid, wherein said first and second modules are assumable and dis-assemblable by means of one of a bayonet-type interconnection, screwing interconnection, and a snap interconnection (Figs. 1, 3 and 6).

8. Claims 1 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Puthuff et al. (U.S. Pat. - 6,021,207).

Regarding claim 1, Puthuff et al. disclose a **hearing device** (Fig. 4), comprising: a microphone (in 110 inherently); speaker (36); a signal processing unit (in 110 inherently) and a power source (in 26 inherently), wherein said power source and said speaker form a first module (26, 100), said microphone and signal processing unit form a second module (110) and said first and said second modules are assembled in a dis-assemblable manner as claimed.

Regarding claim 9, Puthuff et al. further disclose the hearing device, wherein said device further comprises a code unit in said first module 26 and 100) and a code-reader and decoding unit in said second module (110), the output of said code-reader and decoder unit being operationally connected to at least one control input of an electronic unit within said second module as claimed.

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9. Claims 1-2, 4-6, 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Harless (U.S. Pat. - 4,723,293).

Regarding claim 1, Harless discloses **a hearing aid apparatus** (Fig. 5), comprising: a microphone (47); speaker (20); a signal processing unit (48) and a power source (24), wherein said power source and said speaker form a first module (Fig. 4), said microphone and signal processing unit form a second module (30) and said first and said second modules are assembled in a dis-assemblable manner (12) as claimed.

Regarding claim 2, Harless further discloses the hearing aid apparatus, wherein said power source and said speaker are unremovably integrated in said first module, said first module being as a whole an exchange part (Figs. 1-3).

Regarding claim 4, Harless further discloses the hearing aid apparatus, wherein said second module comprises a control unit (46) for said signal processing unit.

Regarding claim 5, Harless further discloses the hearing aid apparatus, wherein said hearing aid device is one of an In-The-Ear hearing aid device and of an Outside-The-Ear hearing aid device (Fig. 1) as claimed.

Regarding claim 6, Harless further discloses the hearing aid apparatus, wherein said power supply unit is one of a non-rechargeable battery arrangement and a rechargeable accumulator arrangement (24).

Regarding claim 11, Harless further discloses the hearing aid apparatus, wherein said apparatus further comprises an electronic unit (22) within said first module, said electronic unit for said electrical supply unit and said electrical to mechanical converter within said first module.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 3, 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harless (U.S. Pat. - 4,723,293).

Regarding claim 3, Harless may not clearly teach an On/Off control arrangement of said first module as claimed. Since providing a On/Off control arrangement for a hearing aid is very well known in the art, it therefore would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to be motivated to provide a suitable On/Off control arrangement, such as a switch for the first module or the hearing aid of the hearing device as an alternate choice, in order to efficiently operate the hearing aid.

Regarding claim 7, Harless may not clearly teach a replaceable power source as claimed. Since providing a replaceable power source for a hearing aid is very well known in the art, it therefore would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to be motivated to provide a suitable replaceable power source, such as a battery for the first module or the hearing aid of the hearing device as an alternate choice, in order to efficiently operate the hearing aid.

Conclusion


11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Suhan Ni** whose telephone number is **(571)-272-7505**, and the number for fax machine is **(571)-273-7505**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. If it is necessary, the examiner's supervisor, **Sinh N. Tran**, can be reached at **(571)-272-7564**.

13. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (**PAIR**) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov/>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

14. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is **(571)-272-2600**, or please see <http://www.uspto.gov/web/info/2600>.


SUHAN NI
PRIMARY EXAMINER

March 22, 2006